

What is claimed is:

1. A browse information management system using a computer, the system comprising:

original data which is browse information;

a plurality of pieces of mask layer data in each of which a graphic covering a confidential portion is drawn in accordance with a browse authority level;

a selecting means for selecting a single or plurality of pieces of mask layer data from among said plurality of pieces of mask layer data in accordance with said browse authority level of a user; and

a combining means for combining, with respect to said original data, said single or plurality of pieces of mask layer data selected by said selecting means,

wherein when browse of said browse information is requested from the user, a concealing process is performed to said browse information by said selecting means and said combining means.

2. The browse information management system according to claim 1,

wherein said original data is composed of a plurality of pieces of original data, and

the system further comprises a browse possibility/impossibility determining means for determining a browse possibility/impossibility of each of said plurality of pieces of original data in accordance with said browse authority level of said user, and for getting

said user to specify the original data through communication with said user.

3. The browse information management system according to claim 2,

wherein said determining means and said selecting means each have a browse authority master to be referred to, and

said browse authority master has identification information of the user, browse possibility/impossibility information of original data by said user, and mask layer data selecting information of original data browsable by the user.

4. The browse information management system according to claim 3,

wherein said browse authority master has a user authority master and a mask layer master,

said user authority master has a data structure capable of specifying said browse authority level of said user and original data browsable by said user in accordance with identification information of said user, and

said mask layer master has a data structure capable of specifying a single or plurality of pieces of mask layer data to be combined with said original data, in accordance with said browse authority level and said original data specified with reference to said user authority master.

5. The browse information management system according to claim 4, further comprising:

a browse information library; a mask layer library;
and a mask layer combining section,

wherein a large amount of original data is stored in
said browse information library,

a large amount of mask layer data is stored in said
mask layer library,

said browse possibility/impossibility determining
means specifies, in response to a browse request from a
user, a browse authority level of said user with reference
to said user authority master, and specifies original data
through communication with said user to extract said
specified original data from said browse information
library,

said mask layer data selecting means specifies a
single or plurality of pieces of mask layer data with
reference said the mask layer master, in accordance with
said specified original data and said browse authority
level, to extract said specified single or plurality of
pieces of mask layer data from said mask layer library, and

said mask layer data combining means transmits, to
said mask layer combining section, the original data
extracted by said determining means and the single or
plurality of pieces of mask layer data extracted by said
selecting means so as to be combined in said mask layer
combining section.

6. A browse information management system comprising
a client-server type network system,

wherein a server system has a browse information management system according to any one of claims 1 to 5, and

a client terminal has a browser so that a user makes a browse request of browse information to said server system and acquires browse information through said server system in accordance with a browse authority level of said user.

7. A browse information management system comprising a client-server type network system,

wherein the system has a first server system and a second server system connected to each other via a network,

the browse information management system according to claim 5 is constructed in said first server system and said second server system in a distributed manner,

said first server system has said browse authority master,

said second server system has said mask layer library, said browse information library, and said mask layer combining section, and

when a browse request is transmitted by a user from a client terminal to said first server system, browse information based on a browse authority level of the user is specified through communication between said first server system and said second server system and the specified browse information is returned from said second server system to said client terminal.

8. A browse information management system comprising a client-server type network system,

wherein the system has a first server system and a second server system connected to each other via a network,

the browse information management system according to claim 5 is constructed in said first server system and said second server system in a distributed manner,

said first server system has said browse authority master and said mask layer library,

said second server system has said browse information library and said mask layer combining section, and

when a browse request is transmitted by a user from a client terminal to said first server system, browse information in accordance with a browse authority level of the user is specified through communication between said first server system and said second server system and said specified browse information is returned from said second server system to said client terminal.

9. A browse information management method using a computer, the computer including original data as browse information and a plurality of pieces of mask layer data in each of which a graphic covering a confidential portion is drawn in accordance with a browse authority level, the method comprising the steps of:

when browse of said browse information is requested from a user, selecting a single or plurality of pieces of mask layer data from among said plurality of pieces of mask

layer data in accordance with the browse authority level of said user;

combining said selected single or plurality of pieces of mask layer data with respect to said original data; and
outputting said combined data to said user.

10. The browse information management method according to claim 9, further comprising the steps of:

when said single or plurality of pieces of mask layer data are selected, determining a browse possibility/impossibility of said original data by said user with reference to a browse authority master; and

selecting said single or plurality of pieces of mask layer data in accordance with the browsable original data.